THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

A demonstrator weeps during a candlelight vigil at a protest in response to the fatal shooting of 37-year-old Alex Pretti in Minneapolis on Saturday | AP | P11

The New Indian Express wishes its readers a

Happy Republic Day

CPI OVERHAUL

New inflation basket to track OTT fees, rent

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

THE basket for Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures retail inflation, is set for a makeover. Digital consumption will assume greater significance in the new CPI basket with online media and OTT platforms being tracked. Rural house rent will be included, making the housing index more representative. Coverage of house rent has also been expanded in urban areas.

Saurabh Garg, secretary, Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation, said the new CPI basket—based on Household Consumption Expenditure Survey 2023–24—will see significant expansion. "At all-India level, the number of weighted items will increase from 299 in the 2012 series to 358 in 2024 series," he said, adding the revamped CPI basket will be more contemporary.

VS, Dharmendra awarded Padma Vibhushan

Actor Mammootty, banker Uday Kotak, cricketers Rohit Sharma & Harmanpreet Kaur among awardees

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

Dharmendra, actor | V S Achuthanandan, former Kerala CM | Uday Kotak, banker | Mammootty, actor

FORMER Kerala chief minister V S Achuthanandan and actor Dharmendra were among awardees to posthumously receive the second-highest civilian honour, Padma Vibhushan, for 2026, the government announced on Sunday.

The Union government announced 131 Padma awards for 2026, including five Padma Vibhushan, 13 Padma Bhushan and 113 Padma Shri on the eve of the Republic Day. Ninety awardees are women, six foreigners/NRIs/OCIs, and 16 posthumous recipients.

Other Padma Vibhushan awardees include former Supreme Court Justice K T Thomas (public affairs), Hindustani classical violinist N Rajam (art), and eminent Malayalam journalist P Narayanan (literature and education).

Padma Bhushan recipients feature playback legend Alka Yagnik, Malayalam superstar Mammootty, tennis icon Vijay Amritraj, and banker Uday Kotak. Senior BJP leader VK Malhotra, JMM founder and former Jharkhand CM Shibu Soren, and advertising maverick Piyush Pandey were awarded posthumously.

Among the 113 Padma Shri awardees are former Indian cricket captain Rohit Sharma and women's cricket captain Harmanpreet Kaur. Hockey stars Savita Punia and Baldev Singh, and para-athlete Praveen Kumar also feature on the list.

Bollywood actors R Madhavan, Prosenjit Chatterjee, and Satish Shah received Padma Shri, alongside former JNU V-C Jagadesh Kumar and whistleblower R V S Mani, a former MHA official who exposed attempts to suppress information in Ishrat Jahan case. ISRO scientist A E Muthunayagam, DRDO's Chandramouli Gaddamanugu, and former CRPF DG K Vijay Kumar were also honoured. P6,7,9,13

Ashok Chakra for Shubhanshu Shukla

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

Shubhanshu Shukla

GROUP Captain Shubhanshu Shukla has been approved for the Ashok Chakra to be awarded by President Droupadi Murmu on the eve of the 77th Republic Day, for his role in India's return to the human spaceflight through the International Space Station (ISS) mission last year.

Group Capt Shukla became the first Indian to visit the ISS during the Axiom-4 mission, completing an 18-day stay in orbit. The mission marked India's return to human spaceflight after four decades, following Wing Commander Rakesh Sharma's historic spaceflight aboard Soyuz mission in 1984.

Eight luminaries from Karnataka win Padma awards

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

(From L) Shatavadhani R Ganesh, Prabhakar Kore and SG Susheelamma

EIGHT stalwarts from Karnataka from diverse fields have been picked for this year's Padma awards by the central government. One of them is a Padma Bhushan awardee, while seven others are Padma Shri winners. Shatavadhani R Ganesh has been conferred with the Padma Bhushan in the art category.

The Padma Shri awardees are Ankegowda M (social work); Prabhakar Basavprabhu Kore (literature and education); SG Susheelamma (social work); Shashi Shekhar Vempati (literature and education); Shubha Venkatesha Iyengar (science and engineering); Dr Suresh Hanagavadi (medicine) and TT Jagannathan (posthumous; trade and industry).

The awards will be presented in March or April.

Shatavadhani Ganesh has been honoured for reviving Sanskrit arts of Ashtavadhana and Shatavadhana. A renowned polyglot, Ganesh has revived the lost art forms with over a thousand performances across the country.

Dr Susheelamma has rendered exemplary service through Sumangali Seva Ashrama, an orphanage that takes in not just orphans, but also women in distress.

CONTINUED ON: P6

EXPRESS READ

DKS launches 25-year plan to transform urban traffic infra

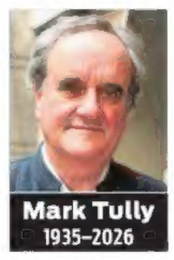
Bengaluru: Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Sunday rolled out an ambitious 25-year urban transformation plan, centred around a statewide 'Traffic Grid' and a hard push for ease of doing business in the state. "This will be a comprehensive Traffic Grid for all urban areas, not just Bengaluru," Shivakumar announced. The plan envisages ring roads for all major cities and strategic widening of roads among others | P2

Veteran journalist Mark Tully dies at 90

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

VETERAN journalist and acclaimed author Mark Tully passed away at a private hospital in Delhi on Sunday.

He had been unwell for some time and was admitted to Max Hospital in Saket, south Delhi, on January 21.



Mark Tully 1935–2026

Born in Calcutta (now Kolkata) on October 24, 1935, Tully served as the BBC's bureau chief in New Delhi for 22 years.

His work with the British broadcaster included coverage of several defining moments in post-Independence Indian history, such as the 1971 India-Pakistan war, the Emergency of 1975–77, Operation Blue Star, the assassination of Indira Gandhi and the anti-Sikh riots in 1984, the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, and the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

He authored several books on India, including *No Full Stops in India*, *India in Slow Motion*, and *The Heart of India*. He was knighted in 2002 and received the Padma Bhushan from the Government of India in 2005. P11

India in our name and in our hearts
Celebrating a Republic that stands
safe, secure and strong - together.
LIC CELEBRATING INDIA'S 77th
Republic Day 2026
Assets Under Management ₹57.22 lakh crore*
Profit After Tax ₹21,040 Crore*
Total Premium Income ₹2,45,680 Crore*
Agency Strength 14.87 lakh
(* as on 30th September, 2025)
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